

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-02 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 /064 W
-----015684 260026Z /66

R 252018Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4820
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 02425

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: FR, UR, SHUM
SUBJECT: FRENCH COMMUNISTS CONTINUE CRITICISM OF
EAST ON HUMAN RIGHTS

REF: (A) PARIS 1304; (B) PARIS 35742 DEC 1977

1. THE FRENCH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCF) HAS CONTINUED ITS
ACTIVE CRITICISM OF HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN THE USSR
AND EASTERN EUROPE. LATEST EXAMPLE IS A CAREFULLY
TAILORED STATEMENT IN THE PARTY ORGAN L'HUMANITE
COMPLAINING THAT SHCHARANSKIY IS NOT BEING ACCORDED
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LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF DEFENSE. HUMANITE SAYS THIS
FACT IS "INADMISSIBLE...EVEN IF SHCHARANSKIY HELD
OPINIONS WE DO NOT SHARE. EVEN IF HIS ACTIVITIES
WENT BEYOND THE FRAMEWORK OF A LEGITIMATE DEFENSE
OF THE RIGHT TO EMIGRATE AND OF PUBLICITY IN FAVOR
OF COMPLETE APPLICATION OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT.
EVEN IF THE ACTS OF WHICH HE IS ACCUSED ARE CONSIDERED

CRIMINAL UNDER SOVIET LAW."

2. ON DECEMBER 14, HUMANITE "DEPLORED" THE FACT THAT THE EAST GERMAN WRITER JOACHIM SCHADLICH HAD TO LEAVE THE GDR, AND, WHILE RECOGNIZING THE GDR'S CULTURAL ACHIEVEMENTS, REGRETTED "THE LIMITATIONS IMPOSED ON THE LIBERTY OF EXPRESSION" IN THE GDR, AND ASKED RHETORICALLY "HOW IS IT THAT A WRITER IS AUTHORIZED TO PUBLISH IN THE WEST THAT WHICH HE CANNOT SAY IN HIS OWN COUNTRY?"

3. ON DECEMBER 17, HUMANITE PUBLISHED A RESPONSE FROM PCF CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEMBER LAUPRETRE TO A LETTER FROM THE COUNCIL OF JEWISH ORGANIZATIONS IN FRANCE WHICH DISCUSSED THE STATUS OF JEWS IN THE USSR. LAUPRETRE'S RESPONSE SAID THE PCF "CRITICIZES ATTACKS ON DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES WHERE THEY OCCUR, WHETHER IN CAPITALIST COUNTRIES (WHERE SUCH ATTACKS ARE IN THE NATURE OF THINGS) OR IN THIS OR THAT SOCIALIST COUNTRY (WHERE WE CONSIDER THEM CONTRARY TO THE NATURE OF THE REGIME)."

4. ON DECEMBER 19, HUMANITE PUBLISHED A LETTER FROM PCF FIRST SECRETARY GEORGES MARCHAIS, REPLYING TO AN APPEAL FROM THE SON OF CZECH DISSIDENT JIRI LEDERER. IN THIS LETTER MARCHAIS SAID THE PCF CONSIDERS THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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THE LIBERTY OF EXPRESSION HAS A "UNIVERSAL VALUE" AND THE PCF WOULD DEFEND IT EVERYWHERE WITHOUT RESTRICTION. HE SPECIFIED THE PCF'S "PROFOUND DISAGREEMENT" WITH THE TRIAL OF CZECH DISSIDENTS AND THE PENALTIES IMPOSED.

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5. COMMENT: THE PCF'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY CONTINUES TO BE ACTIVE, BUT CLEARLY REFLECTS A MORE PRUDENT ATTITUDE WHEN DEALING WITH THE SOVIETS. THE FACT THAT MARCHAIS INVOLVED HIMSELF PERSONALLY IN THE CZECH CASE INDICATES THE PCF'S WILLINGNESS TO CRITICIZE THE EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES' HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES OPENLY AND FREELY. THE RESPONSE FROM A LESSER MEMBER OF THE PCF CENTRAL COMMITTEE TO THE LETTER ON SOVIET JEWS CAREFULLY AVOIDS SPECIFIC
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MENTION OF THE USSR. IN ADDITION, THE PCF POSITION ON SHCHARANSKIY IS A MEASURED ONE, CRITICIZING ONLY THE FAILURE TO PERMIT HIM THE "RIGHTS OF DEFENSE", AND SUGGESTING THAT, ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE ACCUSATIONS AGAINST HIM, THE PCF MAY VERY WELL AGREE WITH THE SOVIETS. ANOTHER NOTABLE ASPECT OF THE PCF'S CONTINUING PUBLIC ADVOCACY OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS THAT IT HAS CONSISTENTLY FAILED TO RECOGNIZE, OR EVEN MENTION, US EFFORTS IN THIS FIELD. TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE ELEMENTS REINFORCE THE IMPRESSION OF AN AMBIVALENT RELATIONSHIP WITH MOSCOW DESCRIBED IN REF B. THEY DEMONSTRATE THE FACT THAT THE PCF'S PUBLIC COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS AT TIMES COMES UP AGAINST ITS DESIRE TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE

SOVIETS, A CONTIRUING DILEMMA FOR THE PCF. END
COMMENT.
GAMMON

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